



GREAT DENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual meeting of Great Denham Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 9th May 2022. The meeting was held in the Great Denham Community Hall, Great Denham. It was also available via Zoom for members of the public

Present:

Parish Councillors: Donna Parsons (DP) (Chair); Chris Staite (CST); Vince Arthur (VA); Ryan Craze (RC); Helen Allen (HA); Lou Evans (LE); Peter Tarrant (PT) (after agenda item 4)

Parish Clerk: Anna O'Meara (AOM)

Borough Councillor: Jim Weir (JW)

Members of the Public: 2 members of the public in attendance; Sergeant Killick of the North Beds Rural team was also in attendance.

Public Questions:

The meeting was adjourned for the following public questions/issues submitted by email:

- A resident raised concerns about the parking along Great Portway and asked what progress had been made with Highways to address this. The resident has himself purchased "no parking" bollards, but this has not had any significant impact. Clerk confirmed that the Highways Officer had made a site visit a few weeks ago and that the road markings on the junction will be renewed; the Officer also indicated that the double yellow lines should be extended at the top of Great Portway to prevent parking that restricts visibility.

Action: Clerk to chase Highways for update, to confirm that request for double yellow lines is being actioned and to update resident.

Action: the Clerk to write to all businesses at the Village Medical centre again to request that staff use the Park and Ride and not the streets around Great Denham, to reduce congestion.

The meeting was reopened.

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

This is the first item of business at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

DP was nominated as Chair by VA, seconded by LE.

Resolved: DP was elected as Chair of the parish Council and signed the Acceptance of Office form.

CS was nominated as Vice Chair by LE, seconded by HA.

Resolved: CST was elected as Vice Chair of the Parish Council, and signed the Acceptance of Office form.

2. Apologies

It was noted that no apologies have been received from Cllr Slinn.

DP advised the meeting that Cllr Ruskin had resigned from the Parish Council with immediate effect. DP recorded the thanks of the Council for the work done by Cllr Ruskin and the support she has given to the community of Great Denham.

Resolved: Thanks were noted for Cllr Ruskin, following her resignation as Councillor. As a result of this resignation a Casual Vacancy has been declared; notices will be posted on Parish Council noticeboards.

3. Declarations of Interest

DP declared an interest as a Trustee of the Community Hall CIO.

4. Co-Option

2 residents have expressed their interest in joining the Parish Councillor; DP and VA have met with both individuals for an informal chat prior to this meeting.

It was noted that, whilst only one vacancy can currently be filled, with the resignation of Cllr Ruskin, a new casual vacancy has been declared. In the light of this, one candidate deferred their application until the June meeting.

Peter Tarrant was proposed to be co-opted to the Council by VA, seconded by DP and LE.

Resolved: Peter Tarrant was co-opted as a Councillor and signed the Declaration of Office, after which he joined the Council for the remainder of the meeting.

5. Annual Audit for 2021/22

a) Internal Auditors Report

The internal auditor has completed her audit of the 2021/22 accounts and financial control processes and her report has been circulated to council; no issues were identified and the internal auditor has included 2 recommendations for council to consider.

Resolved: The Internal auditors report was approved and the recommendations accepted.

b) Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2021/22 (AGAR)

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2021/22. DP read out each statement for agreement.

Resolved: Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 – was approved by Council and signed by Chair and Clerk.

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2021/22. DP read out the accounting statements for agreement.

Resolved: Section 2 – Accounting statements 2021/22 – was approved by Council and signed by Clerk/RFO and Chair

c) Dates for Public Rights of Inspection

Resolved: the dates for Public Rights of Inspection (Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (S1 234)) were agreed; the inspection period will commence on 1st June and end on 14th July 2022.

6. Provision of Youth Facilities for Great Denham

Further to discussion at previous meetings, the Working Group formed at April meeting has met with the Borough Council about inclusion in a tender to appoint an external provider. RC gave a brief update on the 2 options in consideration: Option 1 would require the council to employ a Youth Worker directly to set up and manage any youth facility; Option 2 is to partner with Bedford Borough Council and provide facilities using an external provider, whereby the Parish Council would fund 50% of costs to join this arrangement. Following discussion, it was agreed that Option 2 provides a de-risked approach and ensures that recruitment, marketing, employment and design and management of the facilities is undertaken by an experienced organisation.

Resolved: Council agree to partner with the Borough Council in the provision of Youth facilities for Great Denham and to provide a year 1 budget of £6250, with a

commitment for up to an additional 3 years, to be reviewed annually. RC to participate in tender process as lead Councillor for this project.

7. Review of planned pedestrian crossing, Anglia Way

DP outlined the history of this project: the feasibility study was completed by Bedford Borough Council in February 2021, and agreement to proceed with the planned location was resolved at the March 2021 Parish Council meeting. Cllr Staite has subsequently raised concerns over the suitability of the planned location, and has proposed that an alternative location the other side of the entrance to Retail Centre car park is considered, as he feels this would be a more natural position on the street, and is likely to be better used and he feels this would be safer; this would require changes to be made to the current loading/parking bay on Anglia Way to meet requirements of Road Safety Audit conducted as part of feasibility study, and would involve submission of amended plans and adoption requirements. Council discussed the proposal to change location and the anticipated benefits or consequences of this. It was noted by Cllr Staite that the planned location suffers from the dangers noted for the rejected location, in terms of visibility to oncoming traffic, and the safety audit is incorrect in two points, as the proposed traffic island is missing from the plan, and the audit assumed there would be railings

It was noted that the persistent parking on the double yellow lines outside Daily Needs must be taken into consideration: Council has previously requested railings to be installed on that side of the road – whilst Highways have said this cannot be done due to the presence of BT ducting, they have now indicated that they will investigate alternative fixings. The Police representative present at the meeting confirmed that the provision of zig zag lines will enable the police to enforce parking rules against any drivers parking illegally.

Councillors were asked to vote on proceeding with original location as planned; the current planned location is considered to be safe as per the Road Safety Audit done in the Feasibility Study.

Resolved: 5 councillors voted in favour of the original location as planned, with 2 objections (cllrs Staite and Evans); it was noted in the decision that railings would make this much safer.

Action: JW will ask Highways to investigate alternative fixings for railings as a priority.

Action: Clerk to ask Vail Williams (Retail Centre) to also consider providing a marked crossing inside the car park entrance.

Action: a co-ordinated focus between the policing team and Highways enforcement to be sought to tackle the illegal parking on Anglia Way (double yellow lines and zig zags).

8. Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend

DP confirmed that, following further consideration, the Big Jubilee Lunch event proposed for Sunday 5th June will be moved to the Country Park/Amphitheatre area. The Borough Council have confirmed this is ok, and Archers Rest Café will allow use of their facilities. As already discussed, this will be promoted as a "bring our own picnic – get together with your local community". Clerk has confirmed the insurance position with BHIB.

Clerk confirmed that the Jubilee bookmarks for the Primary School have arrived and the school will be holding its Jubilee event on 27th May: Councillors DP, LE, VA and HA will attend on behalf of the council to present the bookmarks to the children.

9. Golf Course (Protected Urban Gap)

No further updates on this have been received.

10. Neighbourhood Development Plan

LE gave an update on current status. The first draft of the plan has been received from the consultant and is out with the Steering Group for comment. Once it has been reviewed LE will bring the proposed policies (draft) to a future meeting, and also to document the Parish Council aspirations to be included in the plan. A new Vice Chair has been elected (JW) and a grant application submitted for £9350.98. The plan will be brought to the Parish Council for approval before commencing Regulation 14 consultation, which is expected to take place in late summer.

11. Planning and licensing

a) Planning application 21/01582/MAF – 95 houses on land off Mercia Road

Council are aware that further amended plans have been submitted by the developer but these will not be coming out for further consultation. In light of this, Council have reviewed these plans and have the following comments:

It was noted that the trees have now been removed from the green space, but have moved to the parking bays.

The previous concerns raised by the Council in its response have not been adequately addressed, in particular the proposed layout for parking and its impact on surrounding roads, pedestrian and vehicle safety. Placing parking bays some distance from the property they belong to will only result in more on-street parking, the distance between houses and their garages remain a security concern, and any visitor parking placed outside front doors will be used by residents in lieu of their own parking areas, and impact further on parking congestion on surrounding streets. Examples were given as follows:

- Parking provision for plots 54-57
- Property 83 – distance of garage from property
- Coach house parking for plots 41-46 is directly off main road
- Position of visitor parking spaces
- Frontage of houses to green space could result in anti-social behaviour issues.

Resolved: Councils objection to this application to be re-submitted with additional comments as above (original objections to be included).

b) Planning application 22/00825/FUL – single storey rear extension to form gym and spa, 50 Carnoustie Drive, Great Denham

Resolved: No comments or objections to this application.

c) Planning application 22/01016/FUL – erection of annex in garden, 8 Carnoustie Drive, Great Denham

Resolved: no comments or objections to this application.

d) Street Trading Licences for Gino Soft Whip and Cathy's Ices

Resolved: no comments or objections to these applications

12. Borough Councillors Report

JW has provided a report which has been circulate to councillors and will be made available on the Parish Council website. JW noted the following items:

- Great Denham will become a Ward in its own right, as a result of Boundary Commission changes which take effect in May 2023 elections. JW will be standing for election to represent Great Denham.
- Open Space Management Charges – JW advised that he is now a member of the Environment Committee which is responsible for overseeing this charge.
- Estate Management (Service) charges – JW continues to raise the profile of these charges and the behaviour of the management companies and is campaigning on behalf of residents.

- Youth facilities for Great Denham – as reported above, JW has connected the Borough Council with the Parish Council and Hall CIO, and a partnership approach is being pursued.
- Village Medical Centre – JW has been working on the levels of service provided to residents, and it was noted that a new team is now in place and resident feedback is now more positive.

13. Finance and Clerk's Report

- a) Finance Report & payments – signature of cheques/initial invoices/approve & initial Bacs payments

The Finance Report had been circulated and a copy is published on the website. All receipts were available for inspection

Resolved: The Finance report was noted and approved.

- b) Renewal of ICO registration

Resolved: ICO registration renewal was approved at cost of £40. Cheque number 100434 was signed by 2 councillors

- c) Clerk's expenses for approval.

Resolved: Clerks expenses were approved for payment by BACS.

- d) Update on actions from previous meetings

- The defibrillator and cabinet for the Sports Pavilion have arrived and a quote has been received for electrical installation by Bedford Borough Council.
- Vail Williams have been contacted to enquire about plans for installation of Electric Vehicle Charging points.

- e) Pensions Regulator – re-declaration of compliance

Resolved: The re-declaration of compliance has been submitted.

14. Correspondence

All correspondence was available at the meeting and a list is attached to these minutes.

Resolved: No correspondence required follow up.

15. Any Other Business

Councillors asked for the following items to be agenda items for next/future meetings:

- Addition/Removal of bank signatories
- Policies and Parish Council aspirations for Neighbourhood Plan
- Update on provision of railings – Pedestrian Crossing, Anglia Way
- Quarterly Financial control arrangements
- Maintenance of Green areas

16. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 6th June 2022

APPENDIX - Finance Summary to 4th May 2022**Bank Balances**

Treasurer current account - £88,230.53 BMM deposit account - £120,106.65

Receipts since April report

Date	From	Detail	£
14/04/2022	Bedford Borough Council	Precept payment (1st instalment)	24,000
21/04/2022	HSBC	Interest on deposit account	7.14
22/04/2022	HMRC	VAT repayment (1/4/21 to 31/03/22)	3390.44
Total			27,397.58

Payments since April report (figures include VAT)

Payment type	Payee	Detail	£
BACS	BATPC	Affiliation fee 2022-23	851
BACS	Groundworks UK	Repayment of unused NDP grant	5403.57
BACS	HSBC	Monthly account fee	8
BACS	Insignia UK	Purchase of Queen's Jubilee merchandise	367.2
BACS	Npower Business Slns	Unmetered electricity supply for CCTV Dec-Mar	31.58
BACS	Clerk/HMRC	Salary payment for April and PAYE/NI	1178.36
BACS	Beds Police	Repayment of unused VERU fund grant	2712.24
TOTAL			10,551.95

Accounts Outstanding (figures include VAT)

Payment type	Payee	Detail	£
Cheque	ICO	ICO fee for 2022	40
TOTAL			40

Committed funds not yet invoiced (work to be completed) figures excl VAT

		£
Pedestrian crossing	Anglia Way	40,000
TOTAL		40,000